

Peterson, Bobbye

From: Paul Kirchberg <pmkirchberg@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2019 10:10 AM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: HB. No. 1085 Testimony Response

Raised H.B. No. 1085 Testimony Response

March 22, 2019

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Paul Kirchberg from Milford, CT and I am opposed to HB 1085 in the manner that this bill is currently written.

The raised bills in this legislative session inherently acknowledge the intoxicating effect of cannabis. Alcohol, a legal intoxicant, was once subject to prohibition, similar to cannabis now. The concerns about the dangers of alcohol are identical to the concerns with cannabis with one exception; there has been no documented overdose from cannabis use. Therefore, cannabis is a safer intoxicant than alcohol. Yet, Section 2 provides greater restrictions for cannabis than alcohol.

The verbiage in this bill does not do enough to correct the wrongs of the cannabis prohibition and the unjust War on Drugs. This bill echos the false statements of prior administrations, that cannabis is a danger to society. As this bill is written, it would give more freedoms to people who choose to consume more harmful substances like alcohol and tobacco. This bill does not provide for legal space to consume outside of private residents and will keep people behind closed doors. With this proposed bill, legislators are effectively creating language to punishing residents prior to even legalizing the substance recreationally.

There is no mention to legalize home grows cannabis for personal consumption, a similar luxury that alcohol consumers are granted. Home grown cannabis should not and does not need to be regulated as it will never be allowed to be sold. At the very least, home grow language should be granted to the medical patient base to help guarantee patients have access to their medicinal needs.

Retail should not be allowed until a Cannabis Control Commission is established and functioning. Proposing July 1, 2019 is not a realistic deadline as it will not provide an adequate timeline for the establishment of any type of equitable program. Following the proposed corporate timeline will only provide opportunity to handful of players of who represent out of state organizations. This bill should be considered illegal as it should fall under anti-trust laws given their ability to collude and price gauge the consumer base. These claims have already been made against the current medical program. You cannot properly base nor forecast a legal retail recreational market on the experience from players who have never truly participated in free-market here in Connecticut.

Suggested expungement and possession limits are too low to truly make and societal impact. Other states are expunging "felony charges" where this proposed bill will only expunge small possession misdemeanor

charges. There is an opportunity to make a difference in Connecticut and this bill does not do enough to end prohibition and correct its failed policing initiatives.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Paul Kirchberg